

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 05879 131443Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4559

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 5879

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID EGEN USEGJC

SUBJECT: ARAB EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR EGYPT

REF: CAIRO 5784

1. AS REPORTED REFTEL MINFINANCE ABU ISMAIL DECLINED A FEW DAYS AGO TO PROVIDE FIGURES ON EXPECTED SAUDI AND KUWAITI EMERGENCY AID TO EGYPT. IN CALL ON ME THIS MORNING, AMBASSDOR ASHRAF GHORBAL RELATED HE HAD JUST COME FROM SEEING MIN ECONOMIC COOPERATION SHAFEI, WHO TOLD HIM SAUDIS AND KUWAITIS HAD AGREED PROVIDE GOE IN NEXT FEW WEEKS WITH DOLLARS 600 MILLION AND 400 MILLION RESPECTIVELY. NONE OF THAT MONEY HAS YET BEEN RECEIVED.

2. COMMENT: IT IS REGRETTABLE THAT ABU ISMAIL IS RELUCTANT TO GIVE FIGURES, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE HE FEELS THAT DOING SO MIGHT TAKE OFF SOME OF THE HEAT ON OTHER POTENTIAL DONORS. IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT WE MAKE IT CLEAR TO ABU ISMAIL THAT IF WE ARE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EXERCISE, GOE HAS TO BE FORTH-COMING AND CANDID WITH US ON DONOR ASSISTANCE FROM VARIOUS SOURCES. SINCE UNDERSECRETARY ROBINSON WILL NOT NOW BE HERE UNTIL LATE IN JUNE, IT MAY BE USEFUL IF I WERE INSTRUCTED TO EXPRESS TO ABU ISMAIL CONFIDENTIAL

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IN LOW KEY FASHION OUR PUZZLEMENT AT EGYPTIAN UN-

WILLINGNESS TO DISCLOSE ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION ON
PROBLEM WITH WHICH THEY ARE ASKING US TO HELP
AND POINT OUT GENTLY BUT FIRMLY THAT OUR ABILITY
TO HELP DEPENDS UPON FULL CONFIDENCE BETWEEN
US. IF EGYPTIANS DESIRE, THEY COULD BE ASSURED THAT
ANY FIGURES ON ARAB AID THAT THEY GIVE US WILL
BE CLOSELY HELD, ALTHOUGH EGYPTIANS MUST ALSO
REALIZE THAT EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE DONORS WILL AT SOME
POINT EXPECT TO BE FILLED IN ON ARAB AS WELL AS NON-
ARAB AID. AS A MATTER OF FACT, IT WOULD BE GOOD IF
SOME SORT OF ASSURANCES COULD BE OBTAINED FROM
GOE THAT PROMISED ONE BILLION DOLLAR SAUDI/KUWAITI
HELP WILL BE USED TO CONVERT THEIR EXISTING SHORT TERM
DEBTS TO MEDIUM TERM OBLIGATIONS. THIS SHOULD IN
NO WAY HURT THEIR CASE FOR BALANCE OF PAYMENTS ASSISTANCE
OF THE TYPE WE ARE DISCUSSING.

EILTS

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